FOCUS ON FAMINE

‘It has become so normal to hear people talk about losing a family member’

Emmanuela Bringi, metroNEWS

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Your essential daily news | THURSDAY, MARCH 30, 2017

High 10°C/Low 3°C Chance of rain

AURORA BOREALIS TODAY

I wonder how good the security is in this place?
The million-dollar coin heist from Berlin’s Bode Museum has us thinking the same thing about the Winnipeg Art Gallery.
metroNEWS

Trudeau skips over Emerson

IMMIGRATION

Reeve urges prime minister to visit refugee border town

Jessica Botelho-Urbanski
Metro | Winnipeg

After Justin Trudeau made a quick stop in Winnipeg Wednesday to reiterate childcare promises, the reeve of Emerson-Franklin said he wished the prime minister would have also swung by his municipality to discuss border security.

At a morning press conference, Trudeau briefly restated the government’s position to remain firm on the Safe Third Country Agreement, which is meant to prevent asylum seekers from filing multiple refugee claims between Canada and the U.S.

“We continue to look and reflect very carefully on our international obligation on our refugee and immigration system. We’re very aware that the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees continues to support both the Third Country Agreement and the processes in place in Canada and the United States,” Trudeau said during a morning press conference.

“But we know how important it is that Canadians have confidence, both in the integrity of our borders and in the integrity of our immigration system.”

If Janzen had face time with Trudeau, he said he would voice his concerns.

“It’s not that we don’t want these asylum seekers in Canada, it’s how they’re coming in,” he said.

“The people in Emerson are getting more concerned all the time. It is getting nice, we’re going to have bonfires outside. We don’t want people running around through town, through our yards in the middle of the night.”

Monthly figures on the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada website show 161 people were intercepted by Manitoba RCMP between January and February.

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WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5

CBC Radio's Now or Never

West End Cultural Centre | 7:00 pm | Tickets: $20

HOSTS: Ify Chiwetelu and Trevor Dineen

The popular CBC Radio show about Canadians who make things happen!

Ali Hassan: Muslim Interrupted

West End Cultural Centre | 9:00 pm | Tickets: $20

OPENER: Robby Hoffman

CAST: Ali Hassan

A personal and hilarious one man show featuring comic and host of CBC Radio's Laugh Out Loud Ali Hassan.

THURSDAY, APRIL 6

CBC Radio's Because News

West End Cultural Centre | 7:00 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Gavin Crawford

CBC Radio's Because News is Canada's funniest news quiz.

The Winnipeg Show

West End Cultural Centre | 10:00 pm | Tickets: $15

HOST: Bruce Clark

CAST: Chad Anderson, Dana Smith, Ben Walker, Tim Gray, Carole Cunningham, Andy Noble, Dan Verville

Former "Tonight Show" comic Bruce Clark returns home to the Peg to host the ever popular Winnipeg Show. BUY LOCAL!

FRIDAY, APRIL 7

Alicia Tobin's Come Draw with Me

West End Cultural Centre | 7:00 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Alicia Tobin

CAST: Amanda Brooke Perrin, Jen Grant, Jacob Samuel

Join Alicia Tobin and her special guests for an evening of drawing, laughing, sharing and friendship. Part comedy show, part art class... well, probably not. Supplies provided, no talent required.

Tales From Late Night

West End Cultural Centre | 10:00 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Bruce Clark

CAST: Lara Rae, Ivan Decker, Tim Gray and much more!

With the Musical stylings of Lloyd Peterson and his band

Like Conan, Jimmy, and Letterman... Clark presents a comedy variety late night talk show with live band.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

No Bro Show

West End Cultural Centre | 7:30 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Lara Rae

CAST: Fatima Dhowre, Jackie Kashian, Robby Hoffman, Nikki Payne, Ashley Moffatt, Shazia Mirza

Not once, not twice but four times with ladies. The fiercely female show returns for its fourth year. By women, for everyone.

SATURDAY, APRIL 8

Feminist Gong Show

West End Cultural Centre | 9:30 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Erica Sigurdson

CAST: Bruce Clark, Ivan Decker, Derek Seguin

PANEL: Carole Cunningham, Robby Hoffman, Ashley Moffatt

A comedy game show where male comedians are pitted against our panel of feminist judges. Dodge the gong and winner takes all.

SUNDAY, APRIL 9

You're Welcome

West End Cultural Centre | 12 noon | Tickets: Free

HOST: Martha Chaves

CAST: Fatima Dhowre, Chad Anderson, Mark James Heath, Ben Walker

An afternoon of ethnic comedy for new and old Canadians. All are welcome.

Shazia Mirza: The Kardashians Made Me Do It

West End Cultural Centre | 3:00 pm | Tickets: $20

HOST: Shazia Mirza

Bringing her hit show from London England, Mirza focuses her wry wit on life, love and Jihadi brides.

Tickets available at www.winnipegcomedyfestival.com
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metro NEWS

Your essential daily news

Britain has triggered a two-year divorce process from the European Union. **World**

Via Rail's golden ticket to Churchill hard to come by

TOURISM

Youth pass so popular rail company had to pause sales

Braeden Jones
Metro | Winnipeg

This summer, polar bears, beluga whales, dog sledding and everything that makes Churchill an acclaimed travel destination may be more accessible than ever.

The recently announced Canada 150 Youth Pass from VIA Rail promises travellers between 12 and 25 years old an affordable $150 fare to any stop from coast-to-coast, as well as to Manitoba's photogenic northern border.

The pass has proven so popular that the rail company first had to pause sales due to "technical difficulties," and eventually suspend them temporarily, as they announced on Twitter late Wednesday afternoon. The website was back up and running by the evening.

Travel Manitoba travel counsellor Emilie Messier said that if passes sold are honoured or anyone can get their hands on one, it would be a "great deal, if you can get it."

She explained that July, the only month the pass would be valid for, is even one of the best times to visit Churchill.

"That's actually a really great time to see the polar bears, beluga whales, and I've also heard from visitors who say they've seen the Northern Lights at that time," Messier said. "That's when you can see the whole trifecta."

Typical travel options—either plane or train — usually cost around $500 minimum, "depending on the season."

"If you can get it for $150, that takes a lot of the cost out of it to start," Messier said.

From there, she said there are multiple tour operators offering various packages for accommodations and adventures for any explorer; whether they prefer landscape photography, dog-sledding, a guided bear tour or bird watching.

"Some will also do tours with belugas and bears combined for one price," she said.

A statement from VIA rail circulated to customers inquiring about the pass Wednesday said more information will come out about it soon, but for now, "due to high demand, sales of the Canada 150 Youth pass are temporarily suspended."

If sales reopen, Messier said it's worth it to get to Churchill for cheap.

"Trust me, it would save you at least $400 in transit alone," she said.

The recently announced Canada 150 Youth Pass from VIA Rail offers travellers 12 to 25 years old a chance to head to Churchill, Manitoba for $150. The pass will be valid in July only, when travel counsellor Emilie Messier says it is "actually a great time to see the polar bears and beluga whales." TRAVEL MANITOBA (TOP); SMITHSONIAN CHANNEL

CITY OF WINNIPEG

Some hiring despite freeze

Earlier in March the City of Winnipeg implemented a hiring freeze, but that doesn't actually mean the city isn't hiring any new staff.

Roberta Marsh, the city's manager of human resources, said what it does mean is "since the implementation of the hiring freeze, no new postings have gone out."

The city announced the hiring limit as a way to tackle the $9.5 million deficit.

But postings for new jobs that were online before the March 9 announcement "would go forward as normal" and be filled, she said. That means seasonal labourers like grass cutters may have already been filled, and the city will add new employees even after the freeze date.

Additionally, if any of the positions weren't filled, they will be, and if those that were filled become vacant, they'll be filled again.

Marsh was unable to speak in definite terms about the positions that won't be filled, but she did say new postings normally made between March and August that won't go up this year are "diverse."

"Everything from clerical staff to management positions."

So far, no decisions have been made as a result of that committee, but it could be looking at a busy spring of sorting through hiring requests, as Marsh said the city is still reviewing submissions.

BRAEDEN JONES/METRO

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POLITICS

Trudeau called a 'scumbag' while at Winnipeg daycare

Justin Trudeau's news conference at a Winnipeg daycare was interrupted by a protester who called the prime minister a scumbag.

Staff from the Prime Minister's Office say the man gained entry to the event claiming to be a member of the "world alternative media."

He carried a camcorder as he heckled Trudeau about the carbon tax while the prime minister answered other questions.

He also railed against what he called Trudeau's "globalist counterparts."

Security eventually led the man out of the room without incident.

Trudeau was in Winnipeg to tout child-care investments his government announced in last week's budget.

"Shame on you and your globalist counterparts," the man said as security kept a close eye on him.

"You're scumbags. You are an absolute scumbag."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

> **Shame on you and your globalist counterparts.**
> Protester

UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG

Snowden set to give live-broadcast lecture

Winnipeggers will soon be able to see Edward Snowden speak at a local university lecture — albeit from live broadcast.

The former U.S. intelligence officer and whistleblower is participating in the University of Winnipeg's series of lectures this spring, entitled the Axworthy Distinguished Lectures on Social Justice and the Public Good. Snowden, known for revealing that the National Security Agency was seizing private records of billions of U.S. citizens, will speak May 9.

Vandana Shiva, an Indian scholar, eco-feminist and author of more than 20 books, including This Is What Democracy Looks Like, will also speak during the series May 25.

Passes for the CLASS Spring Institute, which guarantees seating at all the lectures, will be available March 30. Otherwise, seating will be limited at both free lectures. Details and the speaker schedule are available on the university's website.

The other speakers for the series include:

- Renowned American activist, Angela Davis
- Canadian Inuit activist and Nobel Peace Prize nominee, Sheila Watt-Cloutier
- Canadian poet and writer Gary Geddes
- Former justice and chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Senator Murray Sinclair
- Global health champion, Dr. Rohit Ramchandani (via webcast)
- Canadian philosopher and social critic Ian Angus.

METRO

Andrew Kear, chief curator at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, said Rodin's The Thinker is closely watched by security cameras and guards day and night. JESSICA BOTELHO-URBANSKI/METRO

Rodin's Thinker is safe at gallery, curator says

ART

Winnipeg has extra security measures for latest exhibit

Jessica Botelho-Urbanski
Metro | Winnipeg

When news broke of a Canadian million-dollar coin being snatched from Germany this week, the Winnipeg Art Gallery's chief curator was left wondering how Berlin's Bode Museum got shortchanged.

Police in Berlin say thieves broke into the museum before dawn Monday and made off with a 100-kilogram gold coin worth millions of dollars. The massive loonie was one of only six produced by the Royal Canadian Mint since 2007.

Five of the coins were sold to external customers, while one remains "safe and sound in the mint's high-security vaults," according to mint spokesperson Alex Reeves.

Andrew Kear, who's being announced as the WAG's new chief curator Thursday, pointed to extra security measures the gallery takes when handling expensive works, including the bronze cast of Auguste Rodin's The Thinker (worth $1 million), on display until April 9.

> **We're more worried about small paintings.**
> Andrew Kear

Security cameras line the ceilings, while guards roam the exhibition areas day and night, he said.

So chances of making off with the 450-kilogram sculpture are slim.

"We're more worried about small paintings," Kear said. "Those works, we've fixed them to the walls. So if you go in there and try to pull them from the walls, you'll actually take some of the wall with you or you won't be able to do it."

As for the giant loonie gone astray — and likely to be melted down and sold for millions, experts say — the mint could replace it.

The million-dollar coin was originally a one-off the mint designed to promote a new line of pure gold bullion coins. Then customers came forward asking to buy the massive coin, so five more were produced.

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

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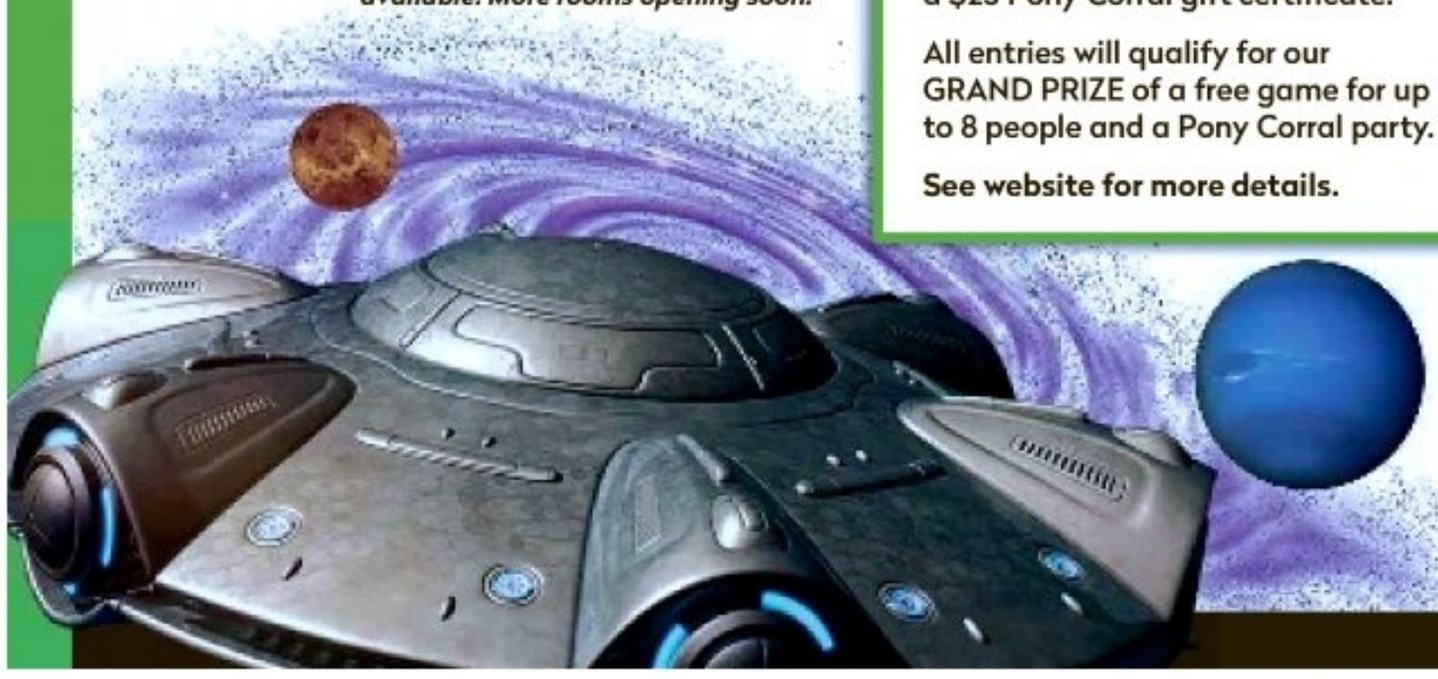
As space scientists with the Canadian Space Agency, your mission is to retrieve a probe that has been collecting data from a worm-hole in deep space for the past one hundred years. You must achieve this before your ship is destroyed by the radioactivity. You have 60 minutes before your ship will be lost. This game can be played in two levels. Standard and Advanced. It is suitable for 6 to 8 people.

This is just one of the 6 adventures available. More rooms opening soon.



ENTER TO WIN!

Get to know our Gamemasters.

Who's This?

First escape game played:
Nuclear Meltdown at The Real Escape. Then my friends and I played both Zanzibar and Speakeasy on the same weekend!

Fave part about being a Gamemaster:
Locking people in a room. Oh, and my fabulous co-workers.

Favourite cause you'd lay down your life for:
The Rainbow Resource Centre.

Life philosophy:
It never happened unless it's on Facebook or Instagram! Gotta take pictures for any moment.

Visit our GAMEMASTER page at enigmaescapes.com

Identify this Gamemaster for your chance to win a daily prize of a $25 Enigma Escapes gift certificate and a $25 Pony Corral gift certificate.

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Last year a group of Gamemasters took a field trip to New Orleans where we played several terrific games and explored the sights. Watch for our Mardi Gras themed escape room opening in the near future.

NEW ORLEANS

This June, a group of intrepid Gamemasters will visit Eastern Europe to experience games in Prague, Croatia and Rome.

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Nature's light show

ASTRONOMY

Better-than-normal chance to see aurora borealis now

An aurora painted across the sky during a night excursion with Northern Tales Travel Services.
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canadians may be treated to an unexpected light show this week, according to the Weather Network.

In a Twitter moment posted on Tuesday, the Weather Network said "all of Canada has a chance to see the Aurora Borealis."

"If you have clear skies over the next few nights, try to get outside and somewhere dark," the Twitter moment read.

People from across Canada, ranging from Strathmore, Alta., to Prince Albert, Sask., to Thunder Bay, Ont., posted photos on Twitter of the northern lights, which were visible Monday night.

And the aurora borealis could be visible as far south as the Great Lakes, according to the Weather Network.

The northern lights "appear as a result of activity on the sun's surface," according to Randy Attwood, executive director for The Royal Astronomical Society of Canada.

"It releases highly energetic particles through its solar winds which interact with our magnetic field and atmosphere," Rachel Ward-Maxwell, a researcher-programmer in astronomy and space sciences with the Ontario Science Centre said.

"If the sun is particularly active that can result in a spectacular light show for us."

This week's light show is because of a crack in the sun's atmosphere known as a coronal hole, according to Yvette Cendes, a PhD student in astronomy at the University of Toronto.

This allows for more particles to "stream through than usual, triggering the northern lights."

"For the next few days, the hole is pointed towards Earth but as the sun rotates, it's going to be rotated somewhere else, not directly at us," Cendes said.

"The lights will likely look green in colour," Ward-Maxwell said.

"Why not take the opportunity to go out and look at the skies? It's a very rare event. Most people don't get the opportunity to see it," Ward-Maxwell said.

"Even if you don't get to see the northern lights, you still get to enjoy a starry night sky."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Couple upset baby photo used to 'fear monger'

Lucie Edwardson
Metro | Calgary

A Calgary couple is upset that a touching photo of the first moments their premature son was held by his mother has been used by a Canadian website to "fear monger."

Collinson and son Hugo.
SCREENSHOT

Jessica Collinson gave birth to Hugo prematurely in 2015. Mike Burritt, Collinson's partner and Hugo's dad, said the photo used by BabyGaga.com was actually a screenshot of a video Burritt submitted to Facebook group Love What Matters. Burritt said BabyGaga.com used it "totally out of context," as the main photo for their article "15 Signs Mom-To-Be Might Go Into Preterm Labour."

"When I first saw it I was pretty outraged," he said. "We wanted to use it to be inspiring ... not use it as a scare tactic for pregnant women."

Another Halifax cabbie faces sex assault charges

Haley Ryan
Metro | Halifax

The credibility and drinking habits of a young woman involved in a taxi sexual assault case were called into question Wednesday, although the Crown said any inconsistencies on "minute details" were understandable with hours of cross-examination, and the case is not about whether she was intoxicated.

Saher H. Hamdan appeared at Halifax provincial court for a day-long sexual assault trial, related to events from July 15, 2016. The court heard Hamdan drove the young woman to a friend's house, where the complainant said Hamdan told her the payment system needed to be re-started, offered her a cigarette, touched her leg a few times without her consent, reached between her legs to pull a latch and slide back her seat, and that she heard the door lock, and he asked if he could kiss her.

WE'RE BACK!

METRO WINNIPEG COMMUNITY CHOICE AWARDS

Thank you Winnipeg

for making last year's Community Choice a success. It's time again to start nominating your favourite businesses. We will announce the Top 10 Nominees per category on June 13th. Then we will ask you to vote for the Winners.

POLLS ARE NOW OPEN

Start nominating at: MetroCommunityChoice.com

metro

Californian cat found in Ontario

ANIMALS

BooBoo went missing four years ago

BooBoo the cat travelled more than 3,000 kilometres from California to Canada. CONTRIBUTED ASHLEY ALEMAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It's anyone's guess how BooBoo the cat travelled more than 3,000 kilometres from California to Canada, but its American owner says she can't wait to be reunited with her brown tabby, who went missing four years ago.

Ashley Aleman, from Watsonville, Calif., said her mother received a voicemail from a Canadian animal shelter two weeks ago, notifying them that BooBoo had been found alive and well in southern Ontario.

The 21-year-old said the outdoor cat went missing in 2013.

Melissa Stolz of the humane society in Guelph, Ont., said BooBoo was brought in as a stray earlier this month. Staff did a routine scan for a microchip, she said, and found one that led to BooBoo's owners in California.

"She came in in wonderful condition, she's been very well taken care of and had no problems at all," Stolz said. "So, clearly there was someone out there who was taking care of her."

Stolz said she first thought that the cat's owners had moved to Canada and forgot to update the microchip information, which she said happens all the time. "After we discovered the owners are still in California, then we started to wonder what could have happened," Stolz said.

Aleman's mother will be flying to Buffalo, N.Y., on Friday to meet with a Canadian animal protection officer who will drive the cat to the border.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

150 WAYS of looking at Canada

POSTCARD NO. 58

KEW-BALMY BEACH, TORONTO

MY FAVOURITE SCENERY IS THE LINE ON THE HORIZON WHERE THE SKY MEETS THE WATER. I'M SO GRATEFUL TO LIVE IN THE CITY WHERE ONE CAN WITNESS THIS AT ANY GIVEN TIME. **KATIA OSTAPENKO**

SEND US YOUR POSTCARD

Each day until July 1, Metro will feature one reader's postcard in our editions across the country, on Metronews.ca and our 150postcards Instagram page. Get involved by sending us a photo of your favourite place in Canada along with 25 to 50 words about why that place is special to you. Email us at **scene@metronews.ca** or post to Instagram or Twitter with the hashtag **#150postcards**.

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FOCUS ON FAMINE

DAY 4: South Sudan

A South Sudanese girl, Elizabeth Kegi, receives treatment at Al Shabbab Hospital in Juba, South Sudan.
GETTY IMAGES

'We can't afford to be hopeless'

Members of the South Sudanese diaspora in Canada watch the world's youngest country descend into abyss.

Gilbert Ngabo
Metro | Toronto

There are times when Emmanuela Bringi switches into panic mode — like when phone lines are cut off and she's unable to reach her relatives in South Sudan.

"You're always fearing the worst," said Bringi, a South Sudanese-Canadian in London, Ont. She's especially concerned about her wheelchair-bound grandmother who has diabetes and lives on her own in a country ravaged by constant interethnic conflict and a famine crisis.

"She can't even get access to health care because there are no clinics," she said, adding that many others have died from lack of health care and food. "It has become so normal to hear people talk about losing a family member, as if death is something that's just supposed to happen. It's not."

The United Nations has already declared a full-blown famine in two counties in Unity State, and nearly two-thirds of the country's entire population is food insecure. The situation is a direct result of the long-standing conflict that has killed thousands and forced nearly four million people out of their homes, making them unable to work the fields or tend to cattle.

> **They need to stop the fighting.**
> Amanie Aman

Even humanitarian intervention isn't spared. Just last weekend, six aid workers were killed in an ambush outside the capital city of Juba. Since 2013, at least 79 aid workers have lost their lives in South Sudan, according to the UN.

As they watch the world's youngest country descend into abyss, members of the South Sudanese diaspora in Canada are running campaigns to contribute to relief efforts.

"Our morale is down but we can't afford to be hopeless," said Joseph Kau, a student in Toronto struggling to send remittances to his two sisters and a brother in the country's south.

Toronto-based pop singer and model Amanie Aman, whose family came to Canada in the 1990s, believes the best solution to the famine lies in ending the chronic circle of violence.

"They need to stop the fighting," she said of President Salva Kiir and his main archrival Riek Machar. "That's when they'll be able to allocate proper funds towards actually feeding the people and allowing help and aid to come in."

BY THE NUMBERS | SOUTH SUDAN

$298.8 million / **$1.6 billion**
Total funds raised so far / Funds required to avert a famine

1 out of 2
South Sudan has a population of 11.3 million. Of those, **5.8 million people are food insecure** and need humanitarian aid

100,000
People already suffering from famine

SOURCE: UN OFFICE FOR THE COORDINATION OF HUMANITARIAN AFFAIRS

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The South Sudanese diaspora across the country are leading efforts to collect funds and donate.

- **South Sudanese community in the GTHA** will hold a fundraising event on May 20, at Howard Johnson Hotel in Kitchener. unicef.ca/stopthefamine
- **Action Against Hunger** runs emergency food and nutrition programs inside South Sudan, plus some interventions on livelihoods and water and sanitation. To get involved or donate, visit actioncontrelafaim.ca/donate
- **World Vision** is the biggest implementing partner of the World Food Program in East Africa. Private donations can be made at worldvision.ca

ABOUT THIS SERIES

Metro is chronicling the story through the lens of immigrants from the affected countries, with a focus on how people can get involved.

Monday Vicky Mochama on how Canada can step up its interventions.

Tuesday Focus on Somalia, and how this could be worse than 2011.

Wednesday Yemen, and the role of war in the ongoing famine.

Thursday The situation in South Sudan, the world's youngest country.

Friday Nigeria, with views from diaspora members and a local expat.

READ THIS SERIES FROM THE BEGINNING
metronews.ca

U.K. files for divorce

BREXIT

It's Not EU, it's me: Britain leaving after 44 years

Britain filed for divorce from the European Union on Wednesday, with fond words and promises of friendship that could not disguise the historic nature of the schism - or the years of argument and hard-nosed bargaining ahead as the U.K. leaves the embrace of the bloc for an uncertain future as "global Britain."

Prime Minister Theresa May triggered the two-year divorce process in a six-page letter to EU Council President Donald Tusk, vowing that Britain will maintain a "deep and special partnership" with its neighbours in the bloc. In response, Tusk told Britain: "We already miss you."

52%

Percent of Britons that voted to leave the EU nine months ago.

Anti-Brexit demonstrators at Downing Street in London, on Wednesday after Britain invoked Article 50 to start the process of withdrawal from the EU. GETTY IMAGES

May's invocation of Article 50 of the EU's key treaty sets the clock ticking on two years of negotiations until Britain becomes the first major nation to leave the union — as Big Ben bongs midnight on March 29, 2019.

The U.K.'s departure could not come at a worse time for the EU, which has grown from six founding members six decades ago to a vast, largely borderless span of 28 nations and half a billion people. Nationalist and populist parties are on the march across the continent in revolt against the bloc's mission of "ever-closer union."

"This is an historic moment from which there can be no turning back," May told lawmakers in the House of Commons, moments after her letter was hand-delivered to Tusk in Brussels by Britain's ambassador to the EU, Tim Barrow. May said the two sides should "engage with one another constructively and respectfully."

"The European Union is a historically unique success story," German Chancellor Angela Merkel said in Berlin. "It remains one even after Britain's withdrawal."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TERROR

Remembering victims of the London attack

Police officers, Muslim youths and hundreds of others linked hands Wednesday on Westminster Bridge to honour the four people who died in an attack that started on the span a week earlier.

The bridge fell silent at 2:40 p.m. to mark the moment when Khalid Masood began mowing down pedestrians, killing three. Masood then fatally stabbed a policeman in a courtyard on the grounds of Parliament.

Police say Masood, a native Briton, was inspired by extremist ideology, but that there's no evidence he had direct links to Daesh or al-Qaida.

Schoolchildren clutching yellow roses held signs reading, "Islam says no to terror" and "Please don't kill innocent people."

The commemoration came as an inquest opened into the deaths of American tourist Kurt Cochran, 54, retired window cleaner Leslie Rhodes, 75, school administrator Aysha Frade, 44, and Palmer, 48.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ITALY

Women could get paid menstrual leave

The Italian parliament is considering a bill that, if approved, would require employers to grant women three days of paid leave every month, according to the Washington Post.

To qualify for menstrual leave, the Post said, women would need a certificate from a medical specialist. The bill says that between 60 and 90 per cent of women suffer from painful periods.

Critics worry it might deter companies from hiring women.

"The demand for female employees among companies might decrease, or women could be further penalized both in terms of salary and career advancement," said Daniela Piazzalunga, an economist at research institute Research Institute for the Evaluation of Public Policies.

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metro VIEW

New episode March 31 featuring Justin Ling and Shireen Ahmed

CHANTAL HÉBERT ON THE TORIES' LEADERSHIP RACE

There is little doubt that the choice of a polarizing leader, one who is unloved by his caucus to boot, would shrink the Conservative tent to the Liberals' advantage.

Now that deadline has passed for Conservative rivals to sign up new members for the May leadership vote, here are a handful of observations on the fluid state of play in the battle for Stephen Harper's succession:

1. There are still 14 names on the Conservative ballot, but a consensus is emerging that the must-watch list is down to five. That may be a generous number. The names on the list are Kevin O'Leary, Maxime Bernier, Kelly Leitch, Erin O'Toole and Andrew Scheer.

For different reasons and to varying degrees, the first three are polarizing figures whose signature policies divide the party and have moderate appeal, to put it mildly, within the caucus of 97 MPs.

O'Leary and Bernier are the presumed front-runners.

But they may not be the second or third choice of enough Conservatives to go the distance.

That is even more true of Leitch. You either like her Trump-style approach to immigration issues a lot or dislike it intensely. There is no middle ground

O'Toole and Scheer are locked in a battle to be the fallback candidate. That battle has been picking up speed over the past few weeks.

2. Harper's succession could have turned into a battle-by-proxy between the two factions that resumed their cohabitation within a reunified Conservative party over his decade in power. The old divide between former Tories and ex-Reformers could have resurfaced over the yearlong leadership campaign.

That is not happening.

Or, at least, it is not happening in a defining way.

None of the presumed front-runners has emerged as a stalking horse for one or other of the two factions. If anything, some of the leading figures on both sides of the Conservative schism of the recent past are looking beyond the front-runners for a possible successor to Harper.

From his new niche as Alberta's Tory leader, Jason Kenney used an editorial board meeting with Postmedia this week to warn Conservative members against O'Leary. He says the reality-TV star is unqualified to lead the federal party.

On Tuesday, former Progressive Conservative leader Peter MacKay showed up at a fundraising event for Ontario MP Erin O'Toole.

Neither Kenney nor MacKay has had a kind word for the identity-driven immigration policies promoted by Leitch.

3. If it were up to the Conservative caucus, neither O'Leary, nor Bernier (nor Leitch) would succeed Harper. A majority of Quebec MPs have declined to back Bernier. Most of them oppose his bid to end supply management in the dairy industry and his contention that the federal government should not have helped the auto industry at the time of the global economic crisis or, more recently, aerospace giant Bombardier.

OLD WOUNDS The race to replace Stephen Harper has not brought back the divide between former Tories and supporters of the Reform Party, Chantal Hébert writes. (Clockwise from top left: Kellie Leitch, Kevin O'Leary, Maxime Bernier, Erin O'Toole).
THE CANADIAN PRESS, METROLAND NEWS SERVICE

In the battle for caucus endorsements, O'Toole and Scheer have the leading roles. Whether that will help either of them bridge the distance from second to the top tier is an open question. But, for many MPs, the choice at this juncture seems to hinge on which of those second-tier candidates has the best chance of coming up the middle.

4. As they watch part of the Conservative establishment scramble to prevent O'Leary from parlaying his celebrity status into the leader's job, the Liberals and the NDP have no cause to be smug about their own selection process. They are not immune to an O'Leary-style stunt.

At least the Conservatives, by giving each riding equal weight in the leadership vote, have some safeguards in place to make it harder for a social media rock star to turn his or her following into a flood of supporters.

The New Democrats elect their leader through the universal suffrage of their members, without distinction of region or riding. It is not necessary to become a full-fledged party member to participate in a Liberal leadership vote. It is enough to be a sympathizer.

Under a straight one-member-one vote leadership formula, O'Leary, whose main asset in this campaign has been name recognition, might have a bigger lead on the competition than he does under the weighted Conservative process.

5. There is little doubt that the choice of a polarizing leader, one who is unloved by his caucus to boot, would shrink the Conservative tent to the Liberals' advantage.

Anyone who covered the near-implosion of the Canadian Alliance under Stockwell Day 15 years ago has first-hand knowledge of the perils of electing a leader who is not equipped to command or keep the respect of his or her caucus.

O'Leary and Bernier are the presumed front-runners.

Chantal Hébert is a national affairs writer. Her column appears in Metro every Thursday.

How to talk to a black woman at work in 12 easy steps

Vicky Mochama
Metro

U.S. Congresswoman Maxine Waters was doing one of her "The president is a lying nepotist who is running a kleptocracy and he has got to go" speeches. Upon hearing this gospel, Fox News host Bill O'Reilly was struck dumb, because he then said a dumb thing: "I didn't hear a word she said. I was looking at the James Brown wig."

You're not going to disrespect a black woman without hearing about it, no sir. O'Reilly's comment inspired the #BlackWomenAtWork hashtag. Scrolling through, it was clear that so many bosses, colleagues and clients don't know how to talk to professional black women.

To help fix racism, I have put together a handy guide for them.

HOW TO TALK TO A BLACK WOMAN AT WORK

1. Ask about her hair.
2. Ask if the hair on her head belongs to her.
3. During work hours, ask if she washes her hair.
4. Use relatable and evocative language to describe to her the texture of her own hair. For example, "It feels like horsehair," and "It's like a rope."
5. Be sure to compliment her by saying – no, insisting – that she looks so different now that she's changed a tenth of her body that you didn't even recognize her! Say something like, "I see you almost every day but you are unrecognizable now that you have done a new thing with the top of your head." She will be thrilled her efforts have been recognized.
6. Be culturally aware by speaking to her on issues that matter to her. For example, her hair and how it has changed recently.
7. Build bridges with your colleague by running your hands through her hair. It's the personal touch that matters.
8. Hire a second one. You can't mistake two distinctly different black women for each other if you only have one!
9. When you mistake her for the other black woman at work, she will be comforted to know that you "meant the other one."
10. Now that there are two of them, it may seem as if they are only interested in talking to you about hair. Get to know your black female colleagues more during informal conversations about Africa, basketball, Barack Obama and that time you saw someone who might have been Denzel Washington but wasn't.
11. Help them (Fatima and Gloria? Gladys and Phyllis? It's an F-sound and a G-sound…) with their careers! Point them to opportunities suited to their skills, like typing courses. More advanced opportunities like travelling for work should be saved for Robert Windingfield, the intern who could really use the experience.
12. When Flora and Galadriel (confirm with HR) complain you've promoted Robert while they have Master's degrees, disarm with charm by saying, "Hey, girl, heyyyy. Love your hair, my woes."

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Oscar accountants won't be allowed to have cellphones backstage, says Cheryl Boone Isaacs

Bad boy Hynes takes us home

CANLIT

Author's new novel is set in Newfoundland, a place he loves

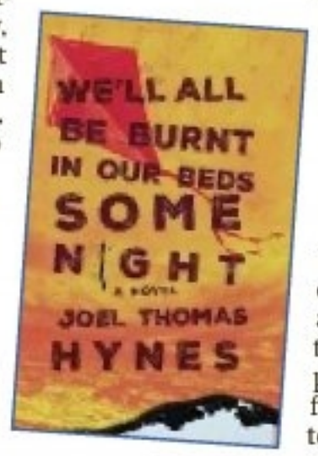
Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

For a good chunk of the year, Joel Thomas Hynes lives in a flat in Toronto's Beaches neighbourhood. Here he is close to his teenage son, actor Percy Hynes White, and to his own acting work on film and television, for shows like Eyewitness and Orphan Black.

But come mid-May, the itch hits and the author heads for the road back home to Newfoundland. Except for last year, when he was already on the ferry, and got a call for a last-minute gig back in Ontario.

"When you come from Newfoundland, which has a small population, the industries are not huge so there's only so far you can go. You can't just be one thing in Newfoundland," says the multi-talented Hynes, who is also a filmmaker, musician and a playwright.

Right now, Hynes is taking a break in Dallas to chaperone Percy, who was cast in the new Marvel X-Men television series. But when he arrives back on the Rock, Hynes gets on his motorcycle and heads to his small house in the woods. "Newfoundlanders always have a tendency to go home. We have a very fierce relationship with the island," he says. Hynes craves the solitude, which suits his needs as a writer. "I live a very, very simple quiet existence for a couple months, then I go back to the big city."



Since his first novel, 2004's Down to the Dirt, Hynes has gained an international reputation as a bad boy of Canadian literature, thanks to his tough, violent protagonists, all anti-heroes with a predilection for booze, drugs and destructive relationships. His new book, We'll All Be Burnt in Our Beds Some Night, remains in the milieu of his other novels, recognizable for its immersive colloquial language and darkly comic situations (an accidental hot tub enema is most memorable). Here, Johnny Keough is awaiting trial for the assault of his girlfriend, Madonna, who he claims ran into a teapot he was holding while making "a run at him." When Madonna doesn't appear at court — turns out she was the victim of an unrelated fatal accident — a heartbroken Johnny takes off on a road trip to British Columbia to scatter her ashes on what he believes was her favourite beach (even if he doesn't exactly remember its name).

Although this novel marks the first time one of Hynes' protagonists has ventured off the island, Newfoundland is still the book's beating heart. Hynes observes a small, raw slice of a culture that won't appear in tourism ads or Broadway musicals, but one that is universal to hard-scrabble small-town life. Hynes says this book was his toughest challenge to date and admits that in the past he's received pressure to try a different style or setting to avoid a reputation as a "regional writer."

But, despite the book's travelling narrator, he hasn't backed down.

"Why can't I have Newfoundland and set my writing in a place that I love?

Hynes may not be done with writing about home, but he does believe that Johnny may be the last of his badass characters.

"The story is not autobiographical, though elements certainly are, and I maintain it's emotionally true," he says. "I figure I'm not in it to make millions, I'm in it to communicate what is true to me and a lot of themes and issues that have come up in my own life — family, destruction, man versus the all-powerful state — remain important to me on some level. But I think as a fiction writer, I've gotten it out of my system."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

Multi-talented artist Joel Thomas Hynes sets his novel in a place he loves: Newfoundland, he says of his new book, We'll All Be Burnt in Our Beds Some Night. CONTRIBUTED

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The ex facing the wrath of Reese Witherspoon

BIG LITTLE LIES

Canadian says being on set is like big leagues of TV

Nova Scotia's James Tupper and Zoe Kravitz star in HBO's hit series Big Little Lies. CONTRIBUTED

Nova Scotia native James Tupper says being among the group of A-list stars on HBO's hit Big Little Lies is the best thing that's happened to his career.

Tupper plays the easygoing ex-husband to Reese Witherspoon's acerbic character in the darkly comedic murder mystery, which creator-writer David E. Kelley based on Liane Moriarty's best-selling novel.

Other cast members on the limited series, which follows the complicated lives of three mothers after a murder in the seaside town of Monterey, Calif., include Nicole Kidman, Shailene Woodley, Laura Dern, Zoe Kravitz, Alexander Skarsgard and Adam Scott.

Tupper says Witherspoon slyly established the bitter chemistry between their characters, who share custody of their daughter, before the cameras even started rolling.

"She was like, 'Hi, James,' she was very pejorative, a bit caustic," he says with a laugh.

"So we would get into the scenes and we'd do them and at the very end she opened up to me in this lovely way, because she's such a sweet and earnest and open person, and we ended up now having a friendship.

"But the whole time we were doing it I wasn't quite sure. I was like, 'Uh, hi, Reese.'"

The show is making headlines for its realistic portrayal of domestic violence, based on a storyline involving the characters played by Kidman and Skarsgard.

"You get a chance to delve into the psychology and that's one of the things I'm probably proudest of," says Tupper.

"If you get to participate with a group of artists and make something that's really truthful, that's about the highest you can go, in my opinion. They don't skim the surface.... It's really gnarly."

Tupper credits a fellow Canadian — Quebec's Jean-Marc Vallee, who directs the show — with giving him the opportunity.

"I'll always be a small-town boy from Dartmouth, Nova Scotia," he says from Los Angeles, noting his East Coast family is practically speechless over his success on the show.

"But just to be in that group of names is obviously the best thing that's happened to my entire career. When you get up to that level, I call it the NBA level, like the top level — everybody is very, very good at their job and very open about working with people. They want the thing to work and they're supportive and give it every reason to succeed."

The former star of Men in Trees, Revenge and Aftermath says Vallee was his advocate from the beginning when he auditioned for the role of Nathan on Big Little Lies..

"Jean-Marc is one of the most open and giving human beings and I feel like when I went in and auditioned for this, he was one of the really big reasons I got it," says Tupper.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

JOHANNA SCHNELLER WHAT I'M WATCHING

Sal tests our faith in this dark comedy

THE SHOW: What Would Sal Do? Season 1, Episode 2 (CraveTV)
THE MOMENT: Repainting Jesus

The crucifix statue at Father Luke's (Scott Thompson) Sudbury church fell and cracked. The timing is auspicious, since Luke just helped his parishioner Maria (Jennifer Dale) tell her slacker son Sal (Dylan Taylor) that he's the second coming of Christ. Father Luke's assistant Rajani (Priya Rajaratnam) returns from the hardware store with paint to repair the statue.

"Dark tan paint?" Luke asks.

"Since we're repainting him, why not use a shade that's more reflective of the truth?" she counters.

He launches into a discourse about how people prefer to remember Elvis Presley as handsome rather than fat.

"So a historically accurate dark-skinned Jesus is offensive and hard to look at, whereas the manufactured white version is more palatable and pleasing to the eye?" Rajani asks.

"Exactly," Luke says. "Now please go back to the store and get me some flesh-toned paint. My flesh tone."

It's a Sudbury Sunday morning here, as hoser Sal struggles to do good works. His idea of that may be taking a homeless man to a rub-and-tug parlor, but as Luke admits in Episode 1, if Christ came today he might be an ass who tests our faith.

So far Sal is testing mine. The show's mix of crass humour and swipes at the corruption of organized religion ("Facts are for cowards," Luke says) feels a bit uneasy, as is Sal's quest to atone for bullying a boy who ended up killing himself.

The show feels freshest when Sal's at his least repentant and his good works are accidental.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

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Fonda and Tomlin series toys with life over the hill

INTERVIEW

Pair market product for women of their vintage

The message of Grace and Frankie is: There's life after 70.

And also your own brand of vibrator, according to this Netflix comedy's just-released new season.

Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin press on as the title characters whose longtime husbands (played by Martin Sheen and Sam Waterston) abruptly left them for each other at the series' inception.

"When our law-partner husbands tell us they've been having an affair for 20 years, we're bereft and cast adrift," says Tomlin.

"What happens when you're in your late 70s and the rug is pulled out from under you?" poses Fonda.

Lily Tomlin, left, and Jane Fonda, star in Grace and Frankie, which is now in its third season. AP

The answer they and their show are promoting: "There can be a third act that's pretty robust and pretty fun," as Fonda puts it. "Don't write us off just because we're over the hill. 'Cause there's a lot of other hills still to come that are pretty exciting."

As the third season begins, the often-fractious friendship shared by uptight Grace and free-spirited Frankie has steered them into marketing a product designed to meet the special needs of women of their vintage. It's a vibrator with thoughtfully large-print directions and a swiveling head that won't aggravate the user's carpal tunnel syndrome or arthritis. Its brand name: Menage a Moi.

Thus does Grace and Frankie, between generous laughs, continue to explore growing older while thumbing its nose at Father Time.

Fonda and Tomlin (today hale and hearty at, respectively, 79 and 77) are the best advertisements for what the series is about. They first worked together in a certain hit film nearly four decades ago.

Fonda had attended a live performance by Tomlin "and I fell in love with her. I was preparing a movie called '9 to 5' that was kind of serious. But after I saw her show, I thought, 'I CAN'T do a movie about secretaries if Lily Tomlin isn't one of them.' And we had to totally redo the movie so it was funny."

Tomlin says she came to the project "totally in awe" of Fonda, and, referring to Fonda's Oscar-winning performance in the 1971 thriller Klute, confides, "I had already worn a Klute hairdo for a couple of years."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Gossip DIGEST

ADDICTION

Cocaine ruined my career, Odom says

Lamar Odom says he's "a walking miracle" after being found unconscious with cocaine in his system in a Nevada brothel in 2015. Odom tells US Weekly he hid his cocaine use from ex-wife Khloe Kardashian for a while, but she found out about two years before their 2013 split. Odom blames cocaine for helping end his NBA career.

REUNION

Buffy cast still looks great

Buffy Summers and her old pals from Sunnydale High are reuniting to celebrate the 20th birthday of Buffy the Vampire Slayer. Series creator Joss Whedon (pictured) talks with stars Sarah Michelle Gellar, Alyson Hannigan and 10 other cast members on EW Reunites: Buffy the Vampire Slayer, "This is like a high school reunion, but much worse because they all still look really great," Whedon says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW IMAGE

Rapper Nicki Minaj signs to strike a pose

The Wilhelmina talent and modeling agency has signed Nicki Minaj. "She is a style pioneer and an icon," Wilhelmina CEO Bill Wackermann said about the six-time American Music Award winner's influence on the fashion and beauty industry. Minaj is known for bold and often risque looks. She was filmed posing in a black-and-silver dress and jeweled headpiece on Westminster Bridge, reportedly for a new video promoting a track she collaborated on with Drake and Lil Wayne.

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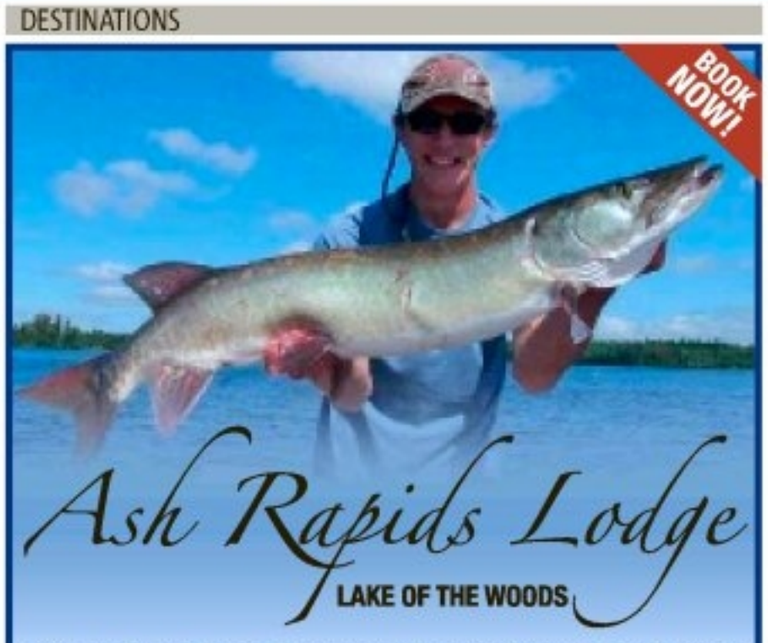
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TLC announces popular home renovation show Trading Spaces will return in 2018

MEET THE CONDO

Lock and leave condos for any generation

CONTRIBUTED

Project overview

The second phase of this new development in Devonshire Village has affordable options for buyers interested in a "lock and leave" lifestyle. Features like private outdoor balconies and underground parking add to the convenience.

Housing amenities

The open floor plan suites include modern flat panel cabinets, stainless steel appliances, luxury vinyl plank flooring and all-LED lighting. Residents also have access to a common lounge, exercise room and storage lockers.

Location and transit

Nearby Kildonan Place offers transit service (including park and ride) throughout the city and buses run direct from Club Regent Casino to Bombers games. Lagimodiere Boulevard and Regent Avenue are major commuter routes.

In the neighbourhood

Big box and mall shopping is close, but residents will also enjoy easy access to greenspace. The walking trails and ponds of Kilcona Park are a short drive away, and the Transcona Trail starts just down the street. COLIN FAST/FOR METRO

NEED TO KNOW

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How to make a tiny condo that works

HOUSING

Researcher constructs 230-square-foot home in lab

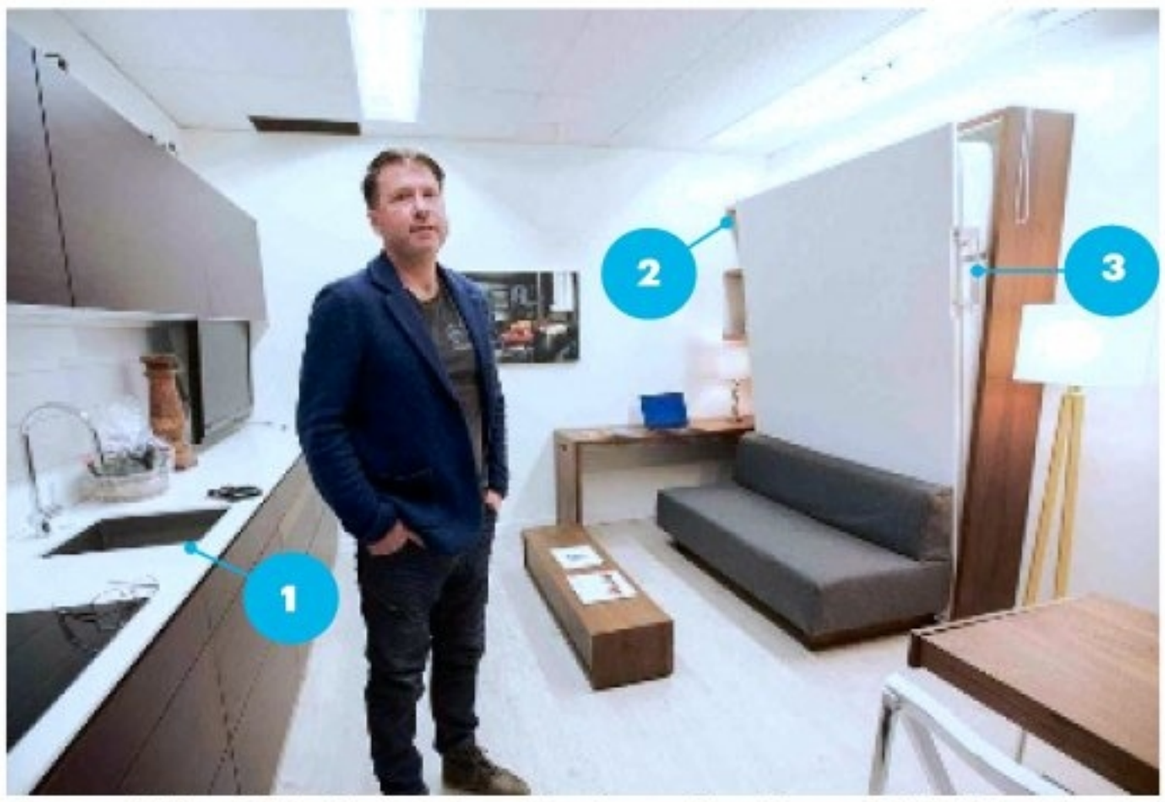
Jeremy Simes
Metro | Edmonton

Tim Antoniuk's prototype tiny condo redefines what most would consider a "cosy" living room.

The University of Alberta industrial design researcher has built a 230-square-foot living space in his university lab — including a kitchen, bathroom, sitting area and a fold-down bed — as part of a project to provide a glimpse into what the future of housing could look like.

"But it's not just for hip millennials," Antoniuk said Tuesday. "It can be affordable housing for people who need something downtown, close to work where everything can be easily accessed."

Antoniuk argues Edmonton is at a "tipping point" where we're going to have to start thinking differently about how we live.



Tim Antoniuk is redefining how people can live, showcasing a tiny condo he built in a lab. KEVIN TUONG/FOR METRO

"We're seeing our downtown transform, but it's going to get more expensive as property values go up."

And as values rise, only the wealthy will be able to afford to move in, he added.

"There's a whole host of issues about affordability and keeping downtown areas vibrant and diverse," he said. "This could do that."

He built it to study how tiny homes can be constructed effectively, he said, and members of the public can also come see it, he said.

Antoniuk estimates the condo could be built in the real market for about $150,000, and would be more cost-effective for developers because they can build more units per square foot.

"It's actually cheaper to buy a micro condo than rent an apartment," he said.

The condo features a sliding wall, "telescoping" drawers, a washroom and a bed that retracts from the wall. If done right, the space feels much larger than it is, Antoniuk said.

"People are always surprised when they come check it out — they always say it feels double the size.

"It's all about making a space feel as beautiful and wonderful as possible."

Antoniuk hopes to build a tiny condo geared for large families in the future to show the mini spaces can function for them, too.

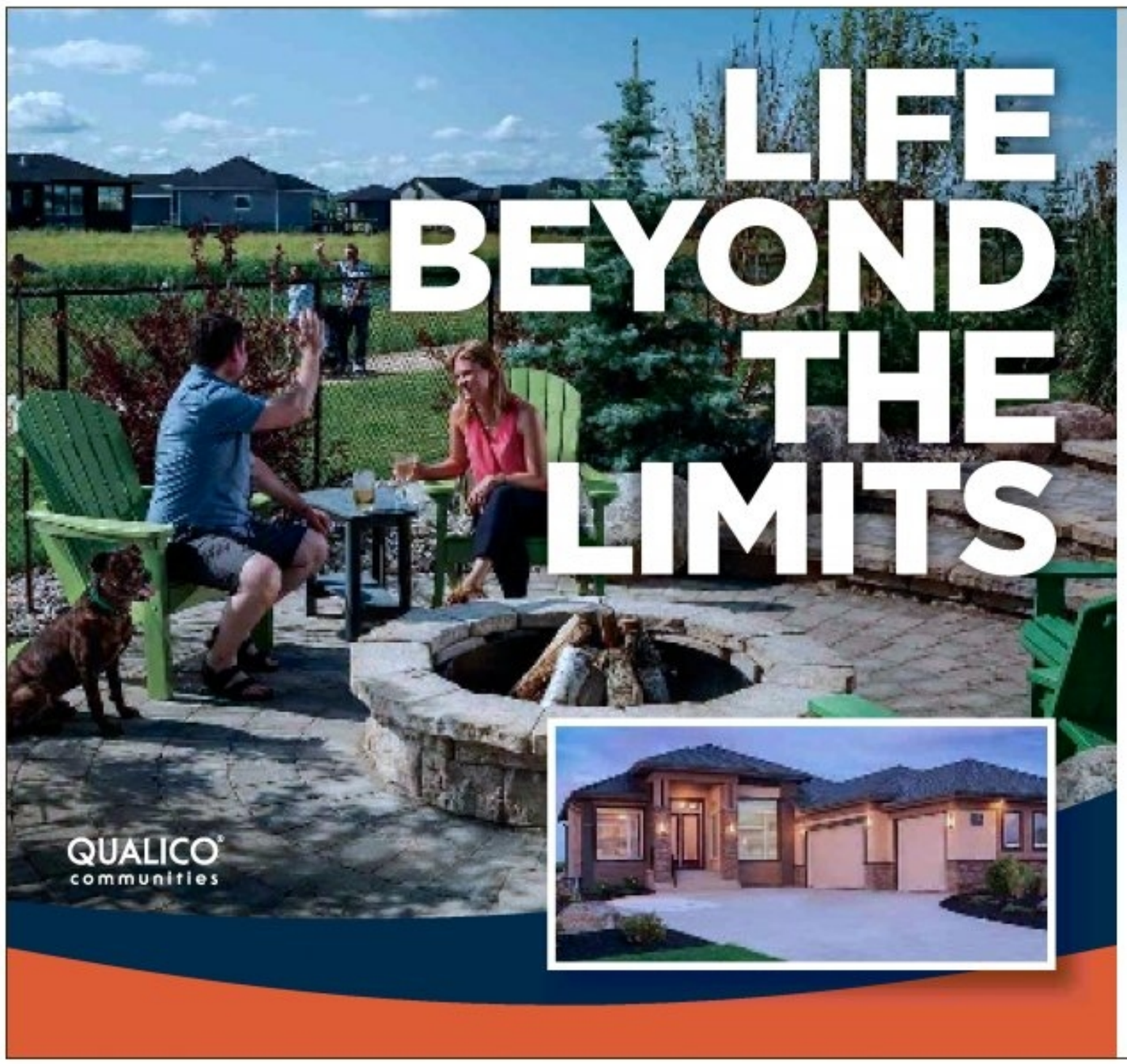
HOW TO MAKE A TINY CONDO WORK

1 Versatile Kitchen: This isn't your ordinary kitchen. You still get a sink, stove and countertop, but you're also able to pull a TV out from one the cabinets. This can be easily tucked away when you aren't watching a show, or need to use the kitchen to cook.

2 Multipurpose wall: The wall has a slab of walnut wood embedded in it that can be used as a cutting board, or as a table that seats up to seven. The wall also includes other storage cabinets for clothes, shoes or other possessions you don't want lying around.

3 Wall bed: A tiny condo still means you can sleep on a nice queen-sized bed. The difference, however, is you'll have stow it away into the wall every day. Once you do that, a foldable couch can be pulled out from underneath the bed.

4 Sliding wall: You can't see it here, but a sliding wall divides the bathroom from the general living space — a necessity when you have to do your business. Sliding walls could also be added in different areas throughout the condo, which would be necessary when you need some alone time.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An odd bronze bust stole the show — and set the internet aflame — at the unveiling of the renamed Aeroporto Cristiano Ronaldo in Funchal, Portugal

metro SPORTS

Expos-eh? Montreal bid makes headway

MLB

Investors meet league's conditions for a team: Source

A group of Montreal investors has met the conditions laid out by Major League Baseball to get a team back in the city, a source has told The Canadian Press.

"I can tell you we are no longer looking for investors and that we believe we have all the ingredients to be able to welcome a team, be it an expansion one or one that already exists," the person said on condition of anonymity.

The source said the investors have a solid financial set-up, support from two levels of government, various potential locations for a stadium as well as at least five different designs for the venue.

"We are not going to say we favour one site or another," the source said. "But it's crucial for the (eventual) site to be well served by public transit."

The Blue Jays have annually played a pair of exhibition games at Olympic Stadium since 2014.
PAUL CHIASSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

As for what the stadium would look like, the person said there is a lot of flexibility.

"We can choose the version we want," the source added. "There are five. They are preliminary plans and we could easily rework them once the project has been launched."

The investors are just waiting for a call from MLB commissioner Rob Manfred to get the ball rolling.

"For me, the most important element in all this is the team," the person said."All the other areas are sufficiently advanced."

Montreal businessmen Stephen Bronfman and Mitch Garber publicly revealed their commitment last year to the project, while Bronfman and Montreal Mayor Denis Coderre co-signed a 2015 letter that was sent to the 30 MLB teams as well as to Manfred. The letter spoke of Montreal's interest in rejoining the major leagues.

Manfred said last year he would like two teams added to MLB in order to make scheduling easier. But he also said that scenario had to wait until the issue of stadiums in Oakland and Tampa was settled.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

2004

The Expos left Montreal after the 2004 season and became the Washington Nationals.

RULED OUT

- Pittsburgh Pirates outfielder Gregory Polanco will not travel with the team for its two exhibition games against the Toronto Blue Jays in Montreal on Friday and Saturday.
- Polanco has played in just one spring training game since returning from his run with the Dominican Republic team in the World Baseball Classic, where he hit .579 in five games.

HOCKEY

Granato: U.S. scores for 'women in general'

Cammi Granato's biggest victory in hockey came 12 years after she retired.

When USA Hockey and the women's national team agreed to a contract Tuesday night that ended a wage dispute, Granato couldn't put her happiness into words.

The Hockey Hall of Famer and her teammates staged a similar fight in 2000 without success, and she hopes the current team's progress paves the way for the future of women's hockey and even other sports.

> **It sets the stage for a major growth in the game.**
> Cammi Granato

"It's bigger than any victory that we've had in USA Hockey," said Granato, who won the gold medal in 1998 with the U.S. at the first Olympics with women's hockey. "I just think it's such a positive, positive day for women's hockey, women's sports and women in general."

Granato and lawmakers, lawyers and experts see the team's agreement as a precedent-setter for other hockey teams around the world and other men's and women's athletes in the country.

Members of the U.S. women's hockey team will now make $3,000-$4,000 a month with the ability to earn around $71,000 annually and up to $129,000 in Olympic years when combined with contributions from the U.S. Olympic Committee.

Now players won't have to work second or third jobs, or retire to start a family because the new contract guarantees that protection along with insurance and other improvements.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

McMorris on road to recovery, eyes Olympics

The brother of injured Canadian snowboarding star Mark McMorris says the Olympic medallist is steadily improving in hospital following an accident in B.C.'s backcountry over the weekend.

"Right now in his head, he's going to the Olympics," McMorris's older brother Craig added, four days after the crash. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Duhamel, Radford in seventh at worlds

Canada's Meagan Duhamel and Eric Radford are seventh after struggling in their pairs short program at the world figure skating championships in Helsinki.

The two-time world champions earned 72.67 points for their routine set to "Killer" by pop star Seal.

Radford is battling an injury to his right hip.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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No worries for Gray ahead of his pro day

FOOTBALL

A lot of interest from NFL in giant Manitoba lineman

Being under the watchful eye of people who can make or break a potential pro football career can be stressful, but nerves won't be an issue for Geoff Gray. In fact, the six-foot-six, 310-pound Manitoba Bisons offensive lineman expects to enjoy auditioning for CFL and NFL scouts Thursday at his pro day in Winnipeg.

"I'm actually looking forward to it," Gray said. "I'm not really a nervous person so I'm not too worried.

"I'm not going to worry about super specific numbers I want to hit. I have a rough idea of where I'm at based on what I've done in training and obviously I'd like to get around that. But I just want to perform well and do what I can on that day."

Gray will go through the traditional combine paces — bench press, various agility drills and jumps as well as the 40-yard dash. He'll also perform specific offensive line drills and whatever movements the scouts wish to see as part of their pre-draft preparations.

I'm not really a nervous person so I'm not too worried.

Geoff Gray

The NFL and CFL drafts go April 27-29 and May 7, respectively. Last year, Bisons defensive lineman David Onyemata drew strong NFL interest on his pro day, performing well enough to be drafted in the fourth round by the New Orleans Saints. Last month, Manitoba coach Brian Dobie said he'd spoken to 15 NFL clubs about Gray.

Gray has also opened eyes north of the border. The towering Winnipeg native was ranked fifth on the CFL Scouting Bureau's list of the top-20 2017 draft prospects.

Gray skipped last weekend's CFL combine in Regina to continue with his pro day preparation. "I'm not trying to worry too much about where I'll end up," Gray said. "It's comforting to know I have options and whatever happens it will work out well for me."

Gray was a Canadian university first-team all-star as well as a Canada West all-star and its top lineman last year. He never missed a game at Manitoba, starting 30-of-32 regular-season contests plus six playoff encounters, lining up at both guard and tackle. Gray also has some American football experience. He participated in the East-West Shrine game in January, practising under the watchful eye of NFL coaches the week leading up to the game.

"(Being coachable) is definitely something I showed at the East-West game," Gray said. "I want to show off my athleticism and explosive power (Thursday).

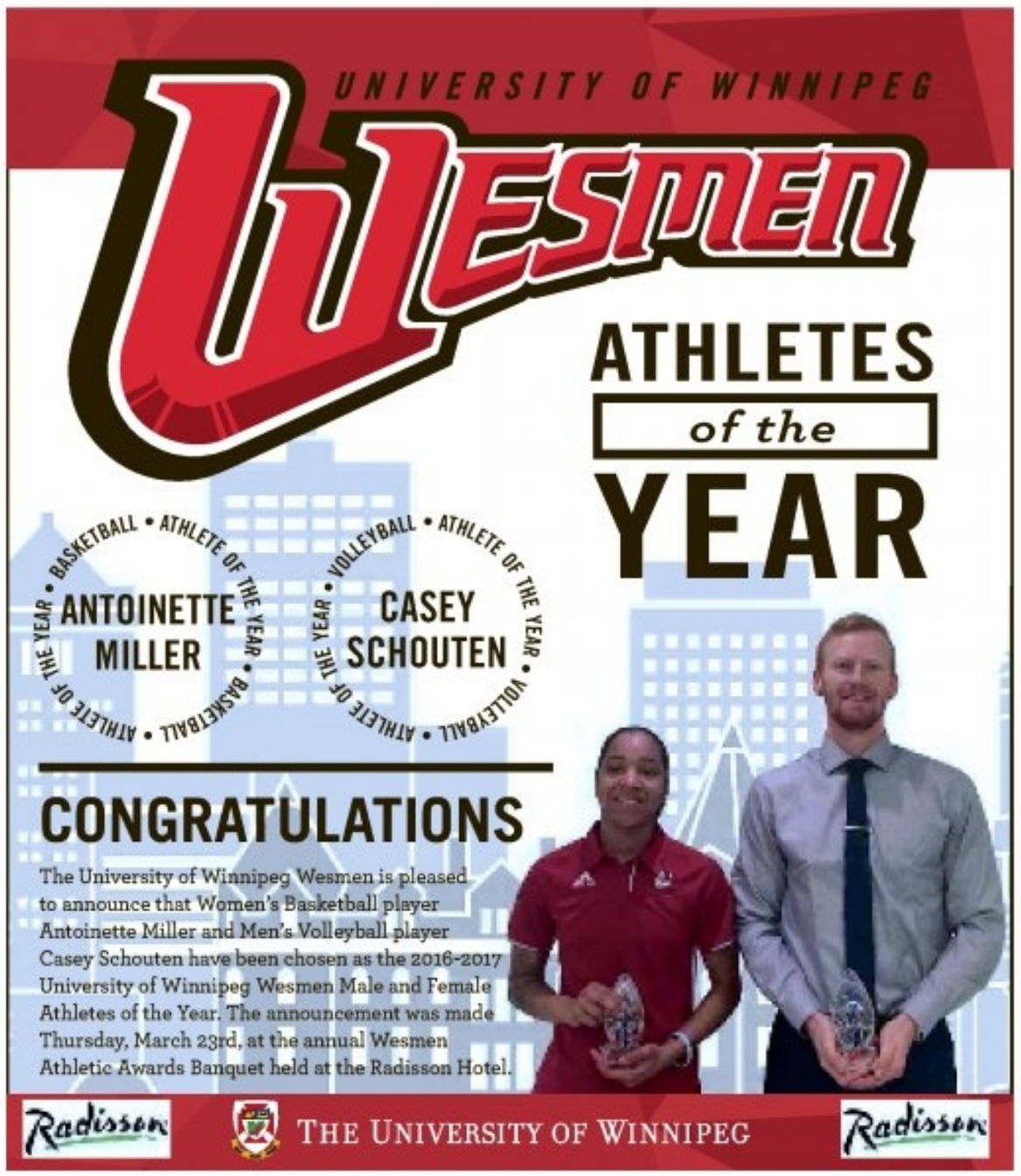
"I think I definitely have the physical skills and that's something you have to demonstrate in those events. That's kind of what they're there for."

Gray believes being a competitive Olympic weightlifter has helped with his pro day preparation, both mentally and physically.

"With weight-lifting I'm used to preparing from the competition aspect of it," he said. "In many ways, how I'm preparing for a combine is very similar to a weight-lifting competition.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

NBA WESTBROOK SHOWS ORLANDO HIS OWN TRICKS Oklahoma City Thunder's Russell Westbrook, left, puts up a shot in front of Orlando Magic's Elfrid Payton during the first half on Wednesday in Orlando, Fla. The Thunder's star man Westbrook was again instrumental in their win scoring 57 and earning yet another triple double. JOHN RAOUX/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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ATHLETES of the YEAR
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ANTOINETTE MILLER
VOLLEYBALL • ATHLETE OF THE YEAR • VOLLEYBALL • ATHLETE OF THE YEAR
CASEY SCHOUTEN
CONGRATULATIONS
The University of Winnipeg Wesmen is pleased to announce that Women's Basketball player Antoinette Miller and Men's Volleyball player Casey Schouten have been chosen as the 2016-2017 University of Winnipeg Wesmen Male and Female Athletes of the Year. The announcement was made Thursday, March 23rd, at the annual Wesmen Athletic Awards Banquet held at the Radisson Hotel.
Radisson
THE UNIVERSITY OF WINNIPEG
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NHL

Oilers end long run of early summers

There will finally be playoff hockey again in Edmonton.

Cam Talbot made 34 saves as the Oilers officially qualified for the playoffs for the first time since the 2005-2006 season with a 2-1 victory over the Los Angeles Kings on Tuesday.

"It's a special feeling tonight, especially seeing how passionate the crowd was and how excited they were," said Edmonton forward Ryan Nugent-Hopkins. "We've had some tough years, but it's all worth it right now."

Connor McDavid and Eric Gryba scored for the Oilers (42-25-9).

"It's definitely special, you saw the excitement in the building," McDavid said. "The fans are excited, we're excited. There is a lot of work left to be done still, though."

Talbot agreed that the Oilers can't celebrate as if simply making it into the playoffs is enough.

"We still have a lot of work to do," he said. "That is just a checkmark next to our name. It is nice that we know we are going to be playing for it, but we have another race, and that is for first place in the division."

Jarome Iginla replied for the Kings (35-33-7), who have lost four of their last five and whose playoff hopes are hanging on by a thread.

"At this time of year you want to be locking up playoff spots and getting ready for a big push," said Kings assistant captain Jeff Carter. "A little different, but we'll play right to the end."

"It sucks for all of us," said L.A. defenceman Drew Doughty, before the game. "We don't want to be in this position. the

THE CANADIAN PRESS

BY THE NUMBERS

25

The Detroit Red Wings' playoff streak is over after 25 seasons, the third-longest run in NHL history. Detroit last missed in 1989-90 and have won four Stanley Cup since.

10

The Edmonton Oilers' playoff drought is over after 10 seasons, by far the longest in the illustrious franchise's almost 40-year history.

IN BRIEF

Sinclair to lead Canada for tough games in Europe

Captain Christine Sinclair will lead a 22-woman Canadian soccer squad featuring seven teenagers to Europe in April for a pair of testing matches against Germany and Sweden.

The trip features a reunion of last summer's medallists in Rio, where Germany won gold, Sweden silver and Canada bronze. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Durant cleared to train

Golden State Warriors forward Kevin Durant has been cleared for non-contact basketball drills and could return from his knee injury before the end of the regular season.

The Warriors said that Durant, sidelined since Feb. 28, will be re-evaluated in a week. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Ref gets death threats

Referee John Higgins of Omaha has contacted law enforcement to report he's received death threats after Kentucky's loss to North Carolina in the NCAA South Regional final.

Higgins reported threats on his unlisted home phone, an investigation is ongoing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MAKE IT TODAY

Crunchy Asparagus Fries

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

You'll never look at asparagus the same way again after you try this crunchy version of a fry.

Ready in 30 minutes
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 20 minutes
Serves 4

Ingredients
- 1 bunch of fresh organic asparagus, cleaned and ends snapped off
- 1/2 cup spelt flour
- 1/4 cup panko
- 1/2 cup parmesan cheese
- 1/2 cup multi-grain bread crumbs
- 1 tsp ground garlic
- 2 eggs
- salt and pepper
- 1 tsp olive oil

Directions

1. Spray a baking sheet with cooking spray and set aside. Preheat the oven to 375.

2. Place spelt flour on a plate. In a wide, shallow bowl, whisk the eggs with a fork. Then mix panko, parmesan cheese, bread crumbs and garlic in another wide, shallow bowl. Now you've got your dredging station ready.

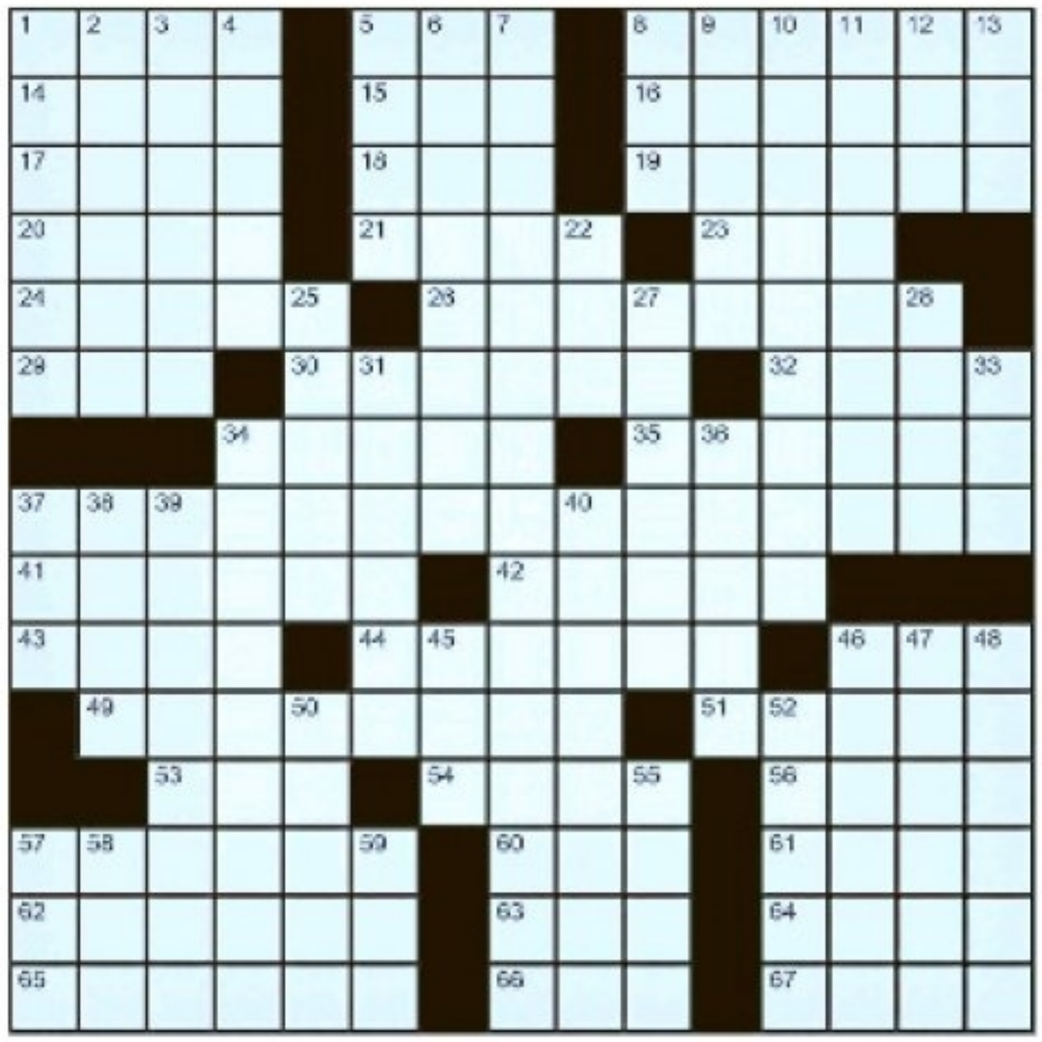
3. Taking three or four stalks of asparagus at a time, coat them in flour, then drop them in the egg. Finally, roll them in the panko mixture and place them on the prepared baking sheet, leaving a bit of space between them. Repeat until you've finished the entire bunch of asparagus. Sprinkle with salt and pepper.

4. Pop the baking sheet in the oven and bake for 15 to 20 minutes, or until the breading is golden brown and crisp.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Prep the baking flour
5. Movie studio
8. Sophisticated sofa
14. Understood
15. "Give _ _ chance!" (Come on, please!)
16. Yukon: _ National Park and Reserve
17. _ of Man
18. Eggs packaging [abbr.]
19. Pro dancer of DWTS fame, Louis Van _
20. Donkey/horse
21. "Woe _ _!" (Boo-hoo!)
23. 'Dial' add-on
24. Nudges
26. Nepean, Ontario born star: 2 wds.
29. Archery wood
30. Alberta Badlands: Pillar-shaped geological formation with a flat top
32. Ark guy
34. Category
35. Policing weapons
37. Michelangelo's David of 1504 and Moses of 1515: 2 wds.
41. Texas city: 2 wds.
42. "End of the Road" by Boyz _ _ _
43. Torch the iron
44. Victorian-style overcoat
46. Bread roll variety
49. Step all over
51. Oil _
53. _ degree
54. Have _ _ (Taste the beverage)
56. Tomato variety
57. 'Orange' tea selections
60. Belonging to Knoxville's li'l state
61. Cognizant of the confidentiality: 2 wds.
62. Betters
63. Initials-sharers of Barbra Streisand's first husband
64. Light fog
65. David Bowie's "_ Love"
66. Q-U's middle
67. Stars in scenes

DOWN
1. Hardly habilimented
2. Be a Sun Life Financial customer
3. Gent
4. Canadian wife of rocker Gene Simmons, Shannon _
5. Gladiator's 2101
6. Becomes ticked: 2 wds.
7. Nuclear explosion or #51-Across: 2 wds.
8. Music style
9. "_ Gantry" (1960)
10. 2003 romantic comedy starring #26-Across and Diane Lane, "Under the _ _"
11. Skin pic applier
12. Mariner's dir.
13. Tube-shaped fish
22. Rock producer Brian
25. Elvis' 'Old' dog-in-song, and namesakes
27. Serve a sentence: 2 wds.
28. Tortoise's competition
31. What a rock band is when getting a lot of mileage out of a private jet: 2 wds.
33. "Amelia" (2009) actress ...her initials-sharers
34. Manitoba community known for its 'Happy Rock' attraction
36. New _ (Avant-garde musicians)
37. Stitch
38. Canadian actor Walter Pidgeon's role in "Mrs. Miniver" (1942)
39. Connected to the satellite
40. Bridal salon appointments
45. Grassland
46. "The _ Woman" (Lindsay Wagner's '70s series)
47. Nearly
48. Garden's greenery
50. "_ _ Oz Show"
52. Ms. Ballerina
55. "Hey, there..."
57. Cooking spray
58. Comedian Mr. Philips
59. US tax ID

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
You might have thoughts today about how to revolutionize a marriage, partnership or close friendship. Maybe these are ideas percolating in your mind for some time?

Taurus April 21 - May 21
Because this is a year where you can get a better job or improve your existing job, you are full of big ideas! Today some of these ideas might come to fruition.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
You might take a new approach to dealing with kids, as well as vacations and the time that you take for fun and pleasure. You need to balance work and play!

Cancer June 22 - July 23
This is the year when you can figure out how to get your dream home. Today you might have ideas about how to improve your existing home or get another one. Exciting!

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You might be surprised by the ideas you have to introduce improvements to your world. It's encouraging. New ideas lead to new results and a new future.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Many of you see new ways of making money. Many of you also see better ways of taking care of what you already own.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
It's almost as if something is in the air, because you are keen to make improvements for yourself and the world around This is a healthy attitude!

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Many of you have been more tuned in to your spiritual world than usual. You are aware that what goes on inside affects things that go on outside.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Your relationship with a friend or perhaps a group is changing now. Fortunately, it's changing for the better; and this is a good thing.

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
This year you'll make an excellent impression on your world, especially on bosses, parents and VIPs. Today you might have ideas about how to do this.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Travel plans, as well as plans to get further education, are exciting! This week you might consider doing something you never thought you would do before.

Pisces Feb. 20 - March 20
You can improve the arrangements you have about inheritances, wills and shared property. Something will happen this year that benefits you.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

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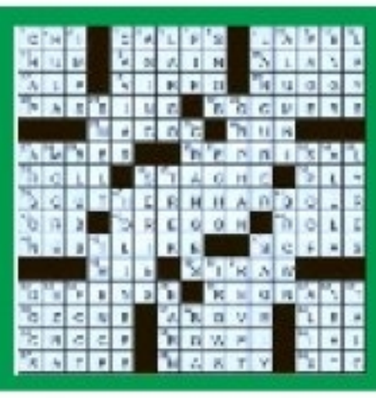

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